No. 681 Twopence July, 1960

THE UNITARIAN

A MAGAZINE FOR FREE CHRISTIANS

Photo: Albert Lowe

UR CHURCHES OVERSEAS

2.—The Unitarian Church of Vancouver

By A. Phillip Hewett

The City of Vancouver lies on the acific coast of Canada, in the midst spectacular mountain scenery. on-existent a hundred years ago, it now Canada's third largest city, th well over half a million inhabi- nts. Its mild and pleasant climate id growing industrial importance ave given rise to a very rapid owth of population during the ast few years.

Just over fifty years ago a small and of people, mostly Unitarians om other places, decided that the me had come to form a church in e city. Sunday services began on a regular basis, first in rented halls, then in the present church, which was built in 1914. From the outset the congregation had to face difficulties. The times were not good for the formation of new Unitarian congregations. For years they could keep going only with the aid of annual grants from Boston and London, and these continued until quite recently. Even with this help, the church barely kept going during the depression years of the "thirties," when the churches in Victoria, Edmonton and Calgary all had to close down under the strain.

To-day the picture is very different. The church in Edmonton was re-established several years

ago; the one in Calgary has just been reborn as a church; in Victoria there is a large and vigorous fellowship which shows every sign of developing into a church during the next few years. As for Vancouver, the past decade has shown a complete reversal in fortunes. Not until 1954 did the membership rise above 100 for the first time; now it is 400.

The church has been enriched by the enrolment among its members of Unitarians from many different parts of the world. There are former members of churches in England, Scotland and Ireland, the United States, Australia, and several countries of Europe, including three Hungarian Unitarian families who came to Canada after the events of 1957. Two of them can trace a continuous Unitarian ancestry back to the sixteenth century, which is something of a phenomenon in a church the majority of whose members have been Unitarians only for a very short time.

Most of the ministers to date have been from Britain, though several Canadians and Americans have served the congregation. The circumstances of the past did not favour long ministries, the longest thus far having been that of the Revs. J. B. and Ada Tonkin (1926—32), who are now living in retirement in Yorkshire.

The recent rapid growth has posed problems. The original Unitarians in Vancouver did remarkably well to put up as substantial a building as they did, but the congregation has long since passed the point when it could be considered adequate to meet current needs. The seating capacity is 200, whereas the present Sunday attendance is normally between 250 and 300. This has meant that the 11 o'clock service has had to be supplemented by another, and a poll of the congregation two years ago showed a majority in favour of 9.30 a.m. as the hour for the other service. Experiments showed that an evening service drew only a handful of people. Two complete sessions of the Sunday School are also held on Sunday mornings at the same times as the services.

In order to provide extra accommodation for the expanding Sunday School a house adjoining the church was purchased three years ago and converted into extra classrooms, but this has proved to be inadequate, so that some classes are now meeting in rented accommodation nearby. A large proportion of the new members joining the church consists of young couples with small children, so the pressure on space continues to grow. Over 350 children are now enrolled, all of them from families attached to the church.

To lay plans for the future a long-range planning committee was set up two years ago. It reported last year, recommending the erection of a larger church in a new location. At a series of special congregational meetings the report was accepted, and the search for a site is now under way. Members were asked to pledge weekly payments over a period of three years to meet the initial costs of the new building, and a campaign last October resulted in pledges totalling $70,000. Building costs are such that a good deal more will be needed before the project is completed, but in the meantime the balance can be covered by mortgage.

Such has been the growth of the city that it is doubtful whether there are more Unitarians in Vancouver in proportion to the population than there were half a century ago. But the recent growth of the church has given hope and enthusiasm to the members. The time seems to be appearing on the horizon when the same will happen here as has happened in Montreal and Toronto—when the traditional one church in the city will be replaced by two or three or even more.

THE USE OF PRAYER

By Bruce Findlow

What is the use of praying? It is a question which many of us ask ourselves at some time or another, either out loud or in our own hearts. When we have prayed, expecting some miraculous answer perhaps, and nothing seems to have happened; we say to ourselves, "What's the use of praying?" Or when we have thought ourselves into unbelief in a God with whom to commune, a God who in some sense hears and speaks through prayer; we say, "What's the use?" and we don't expect an answer to the question. We are saying, "It's no use to pray."

Certainly it's no use to bring about queer miracles—rain in drought or a fine day for the Sunday School outing or a pass in an exam for which we've not done the work, or to make us suddenly and miraculously good when in fact we want to go on being bad. Friedrich Heiler found at the end of a long study of prayer that the motive of all prayer whether that of primitive pigmy or mystic or guilty Christian is "to fortify, to reinforce, to enhance one's life." "All," he wrote, "are seeking life, a confirmation and an enrichment of their realisation of life."

What is the use of praying? It fulfils a part of our nature for we are meant to pray. It gives our human life a divine dimension which certainly enhances life. It illuminates and deepens belief—out of prayer we know more surely than by thought what we believe about God. It makes our religion real and full; "praying is to religion what thinking is to philosophy," someone said. Not least, in Heiler's words, "Prayer is the most tangible proof that the whole of mankind is seeking after God; or—to put it more correctly—that it is sought by God . . . Prayer is not man's work, or discovery or achievement; but God's work in man . . ."

CHILDREN'S CORNER

Raymond remembers . . . ?

Raymond was leaning over the gate, wondering what to do. Mother soon solved the problem. She called him in and said:

"Raymond, I want you to go an errand, please."

"What, now, Mum?"

"Yes, now, Raymond. I want you to go to the shoe repairers for your father's black shoes. He'll want them to-morrow."

Raymond had no choice; and the shop was half-a-mile away. He started and soon met Alf who carried his bat, ball and wickets.

"I'm meeting the others on the field," said Alf. "Are you coming?"

"I can't," said Raymond, miserably. "I'm on an errand."

"What a shame," said Alf. "Can you come afterwards?"

"It'll probably be too late, then," moaned Raymond. "I think I'll play for ten minutes or so now. Mum won't know."

So Raymond played; and after ten minutes had completely forgotten his mother's message. Then they lost the ball; and the only one with another was Alf. But Alf was batting, so he asked Raymond to go for it. Raymond went, got the other ball, and was leaving when Alf's mother said:

"Oh, Raymond, will you call on your way home? I've something for you."

"Right, Mrs. Carter; thank you."

Raymond returned, the game continued and an hour later came to an end. Raymond went with Alf and discovered that Mrs. Carter had a parcel for his mother.

"Now, go straight home, Raymond," she said. "Don't forget."

"No, Mrs. Carter, I never do."

Raymond raced home, threw open the gate, barged through the open door and whooped:

"Mum, Mum! A parcel for you from Mrs. Carter."

"Well, how nice of her," said

Mum. "I'll thank her to-morrow. Did you get your father's shoes?"

Raymond's jaw dropped.

"Eh?" he said.

"Raymond! That's rude! Now, where are they? Raymond, you haven't *forgotten*? But you've been away two hours! The shop will be closed in a few minutes."

Raymond covered the half-mile in record time. Mum had exaggerated a bit but still there was barely two minutes to spare. He couldn't have faced a shoeless father the next morning—and he learned a lesson.

I saw a determined look in his eyes the other day. I think he'll be back next month!

U.Y.P.L. A.G.M.

On Friday, May 13th, U.Y.P.L. delegates from all parts of the British Isles once more polished their badges and set out to Hucklow to attend the Annual General Meetings of the Unitarian Young People's League. Mr. Tittle welcomed them with soup and cheese and, even before they had rested, Mr. Douglas Webster was whetting their mental appetites with one of his famous films. Saturday morning was spent in energetic coffee drinking and in the afternoon the delegates assembled to discuss the business of the League.

The meetings were conducted pleasantly and efficiently by the retiring President, Mr. Alan Curren, and though they were generally very lively, there were only one or two highly explosive interludes. One of these was in connection with the U.Y.P.L. Kinver Camp and another that the name of the U.Y.P.L. be changed. The motion for the latter, after long and involved debating, was defeated.

In the course of the meeting, at which there were well over a hundred people, Miss Florence Stark, of Glasgow, was installed as President for the year. The retiring President, in his address at the Sunday morning service, spoke on the theme, "It all depends on you." When he officially received a cheque for £610 from the U.Y.P.L. W.R.Y. Treasurer, Mr. Roy Buckle, on Saturday evening, he must have felt proud that he had been President of the League during a year when it had demonstrated its "esprit de corps" in so practical a way.

T'OTHER BIT ABAHT T'ASSEMBLY

By T'Tyke

T'Reverend Arthur Vallance browt his presidential yeear tull its cloase on t'Wensda' mornin' an' we thenked him varry much for what he'd done . . . no meean job to tackkle when tha's t'parson at a busy chapill an' awl. His last duty wor to hand ower t'chain o' office to Maister A. L. Blake, ahr new President. Maister Blake is weel knawn for his wark in t'West Country an' ah'm telled that he hez a flock, o' t'woolly sooart, aht in Patagonia. (Ah mun lewk that up in case somebody asses mi wheer it is). He's one o' theese chaps who mak you realize that Micah knew what he wor tawking abaht when he telled fowk to do justly, to luv marcy an' walk humbly wi' 'thi God . . . t'new President does just that an' it wor varry plain to tell bi what he said in his address. Ther' wor one bit abaht Jesus hevvin' a smile on his lips ez owt to bi remembered mooar oft.

T'Wensda' neet browt us to t'Public Meetin' wheer wi wor bahn to argue on sooam rezilushuns that hed bin sent in aforehand. Ther' wor fower o' them an', ez is nobbut natural, t'supporters o' different ones wor cockin' a leg ower ther awn pet hobbi-hoss. No haarm in that o' cooarse, but it wor a pity that after two hahrs tawk nowt wor done wi t'rezilushuns. For missen, Ah came away thru' t'meetin' wi t'thowt in mi heead that if iverybody ez ca'ed thersens Christian wod nobbut act like . . . wi could hev saved thoase two hahrs.

The Manchester District Queens who gathered at Pendleton for the Manchester Sunday Schools Combined Service in May. The preacher was the Rev. Glyn Price.

'Essex Hall Lecture this yeear
' gi'en bi t'parson thru Dukinfield,
ev. S. P. Whitehouse, an' his tawk
" abaht a New Theology. It wor
sooart o' lecture to swalla' at
sittin'; tha wants to reead it
wly at afterwards, soa its just ez
l they've printed it for two bob
me to gi'e iverybody a chonce.
n t'Thursda' afternooin t'women-
k . . . t'menfowk . . . an' t'parsons
tawked to thersens, ez tha might
, an' then in t'evenin' wi lewked
to see that t'young fowk hed
arted aht for us. It sarted aw'
t, wi', t'Rev. A. H. Birtles makkin'
lo o' answering sooam questions
tul him bi one o' t'younger end.
ubject they wor tawkin' abaht
" "Morals." Theease days that
ld meean owt or nowt. Hahiver,
eetin' went quietly until it wor
awn oppen to t'flooar, then it
armed up an' reyt. Later ther'
" sooam fowk said that what
y'd lissend to that neet wor a
illashun, they niver thowt sich
ngs happened ahtside o' t'Sunda
ers. An' t'moral o' that, Ah
poase, is that they owt to bi
amed o' thersens for reeadin'
nda papers. Sooam fowk are
er satisfied.
'or t'last session, Dr. Greeley and
ev. Stewart Carter, gave sooam
ry encouragin' thowts on t'Revival
liberalism up an' dahn t'world.

THE LINDSEY PRESS

Essays in Unitarian Theology

a symposium
Edited by
KENNETH TWINN, M.A.
8s. 6d., by post 9s. 2d.

. . . a fine production and makes a unique Unitarian contribution to the problems discussed. It deserves the widest circulation and a warm welcome. . . .

Towards a New Theology

by **S. P. WHITEHOUSE, M.A., B.Litt.**

Essex Hall Lecture, 1960

2s., by post 2s. 4d.

The Lindsey Press,
Essex Hall,
1/6, Essex Street, Strand,
London W.C.2.

"It is a happy coincidence that our new Rose Queen will be Margaret Jones."

MANCHESTER UNITARIAN STUDENTS' SOCIETY

On May 20th there was held in Unitarian College, Manchester, an inaugural meeting of the Manchester Unitarian Students' Society. It has been decided to have a society for students in the Manchester area, centred on Cross Street Chapel, rather than an actual University Society. A committee was elected, the secretary/treasurer being David Skelton of U.C.M. and Elizabeth Plummer chairman. A programme of weekly meetings has been planned for the Michaelmas term.

UNITARIANS IN THE NEWS

The Rev. Basil Viney has been elected secretary of the Sussex branch of the World Congress of Faiths.

Professor Sir Alister Hardy was one of the two main speakers in B.B.C.'s "Eye on Research" on May 31st. The programme was called "The Fertile Sea." Sir Alister visited Sidmouth in May to lecture on "Science and Religion."

Mrs. Marjorie Bowen of Newport has been appointed a J.P.

Mr. Robert Davies of Cardiff has been elected to serve on the executive committee of the Cwmwr Du Youth Centre project.

NEWS AND VIEWS

OVERSEAS CHURCHES

On April 4th, Mr. M. J. Wi M.A., retired from the active pri practice of psychotherapy to de his entire time to the ministry liberal religion in AUCKLAND, and his duties and responsibilities Director of the Unitarian-sponso Auckland Counselling Service.

Auckland is trying to earn title "Community-centred Chur An adult education class in v music is now meeting weekly. several weeks a large cast has b preparing for the production of Brecht play, "The Good Woman Setzuan." The International Frie ship League continues to use church premises. The Central I cussion Fellowship meets wee The latest grouping, "The Gall Club" is rapidly converting Gallery (little used in the rec past) into a comfortable and attr tive lounge.

HOME CHURCHES

The Rev. J. W. Maw, of CULLO TON, began his duties as Secret of the Western Union at the end May. He follows the Rev. G. Rand Jones who retired on medical adv The preacher at the Annual Me ing of the Union in May was Rev. A. H. Birtles.

A Marriage Thanksgiving Serv was held at FLOWERY FIELD, Hy in May. A Toc H Book Festival v held on another Sunday, books hospitals were received.

The Rev. H. G. Brandt, Minis of the Leeds Liberal Synagogue v the preacher at MILL HILL, Lee Service of All Faiths, in May.

The new communion table KIDDERMINSTER commemorating t late Misses Jane and Caroline Ba land was dedicated in May.

The Mayor's Service at HEYWC was held in the Unitarian Chur there as the new Mayor, Council S. Healey, is a member of the co gregation.

NEWINGTON GREEN Church, n, on Sunday, May 1st, the ation of the Minister's 13th ersary was combined with a Service. The Mayor, Alderman nen, and members of the Stoke ngton Borough Council led the Service which was con- l by the Minister, the Rev. J. Walker. The preacher was Rev. W. W. Simpson, M.A., tary of the Council of tians and Jews. Mr. Walker een asked by the Mayor-Elect, cillor S. Kalmon, to act as his ain during his forthcoming of office.

eport on the G.A. meetings was cast by the Rev. Arthur Pea- in the B.B.C. Network Three amme "Christian Outlook" on 26th.

ce Christmas members of ORT Women's League have ed six inch squares and five ets have been sent for Algerian ees.

w secretary at CULLOMPTON is Denis Crowe, until recently a ber and chairman of MONTON, chester.

000 is needed at TAUNTON to r the chapel roof after the ges of woodworm and beetle.

anks to the generosity of Mr. Mrs. Brookes of MOSSLEY, a als on wheels" service has ed for infirm elderly people in sley. The Sunday School was rded the shield for obtaining the est number of points at the Cheshire Arts and Crafts ibition.

ONCASTER raised £22 for the ve the Children" Fund and STON £11.

e new president of the G.A. has ed quickly into action. One of first engagements was at the M. of the Southern Unitarian ociation where he spoke on "Go and go Fishing."

Welsh Unitarian Youth Camp o be established within the pre- cincts of a disused church in Carmarthenshire. Much preparation is required but activity has begun and £80 has been raised.

ALTRINCHAM Women's League visited Mossley one evening in May and were given a very friendly welcome.

HINCKLEY Sunday School held their Anniversary Services on Sunday, May 29th, when the Rev. G. S. Whitby, M.A., B.D., preached to excellent congregations at all three services. The singing was conducted by Mr. R. A. Bennett, with Mr. A. G. Hydon, who had trained the choir, at the organ. The collections were £109.

Thirty members of DOB LANE Young Wives' Group went on the annual trip to Harrogate in May and at the Whitsuntide outing the children of the Sunday School and teachers went to Knutsford and took tea at the Knutsford Unitarian School.

As a sequel of the Forward Movement in BOLTON Unitarians from that city have been invited to visit the Imam of the Manchester Mosque.

For an experimental period Coffee Services will replace the morning service at MARPLE. Opening with a hymn and prayer discussions will follow in selected subjects, over coffee and biscuits, the whole proceedings closing with a hymn and benediction.

The annual effort at FLOWERY FIELD, Hyde, for the Christie Hospital and Holt Radium Institute this year raised £218.

Members of HALE BARNS are seeking to attract new members by house-to-house visitation throughout Hale Barns.

The delightful Children's Corner at KNUTSFORD has been enhanced by the gift of oak book ends and an illustrated copy of "Through the Bible." They are a memorial to Miss Annie Hough and her work for the Sunday School.

WRONG MAN

In a West Riding Sunday School the classes were divided by a very low partition. One afternoon a teacher was disturbed by the boys in the next class. At last he could stand it no longer. He dragged the largest boy, who seemed to be making the most noise, into his own class, and told him to sit down and behave himself. There was quiet next door for a minute; then a small voice piped up, "Please sir, you've taken our teacher."

EARL MORSE WILBUR

The Rev. Arnold Crompton is engaged on writing a life of Dr. Earl Morse Wilbur, and is anxious to obtain any letters, papers or anecdotes of Dr. Wilbur or anything concerning him which would help him in this task. If any readers are able to assist, the material should be sent to the Rev. Arnold Crompton, Starr King School, 9441, Le Conte Avenue, Berkeley 9, California, U.S.A., who will be happy to return any papers lent.

Northern S.S. Federation
UNITARIAN HOLIDAY HOMES
GREAT HUCKLOW, BUXTON
DERBYSHIRE

No increase in charges. All three Homes will be ready to welcome you. Early booking desirable.

THE MANCHESTER CREMATORIUM Ltd.

BARLOW MOOR ROAD, CHORLTON-CUM-HARDY
(Chorlton 3499)

The Books of Remembrance are on view and the Garden of Rest is open daily for visitors to bring flowers and sit awhile in the peace and tranquillity of this hallowed place.

For advice on cremation and the special remembrance services please write to the

MANCHESTER,
CREMATORIUM LTD.,
2, COOPER STREET,
MANCHESTER, 2.
(Central 4596).

THE INQUIRER
The weekly organ of the Unitarian and Free Christian Churches
Every Saturday, Price 4d.
Obtainable from Newsagents, Bookstalls, or your Church, By subscription, £1 6s. per annum from "The Inquirer" Office, 14, Gordon Square, W.C.1.

THE UNITARIAN, published by Manchester District Association of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches. Annual subscription 4/-. Monthly orders, 50 copies 7/6, 100 copies 10/6 plus postage *Business Manager:* G. HARRISON, 2, Walwyn Close, Stretford. M/Cr. *Editor:* Rev. PETER B. GODFREY, 25, Park Avenue, Swinton, Manchester.

Printed by Nuneaton Newspapers, Bond Gate, Nuneaton